



ASTON MARTIN

DBS CARBON EDITION | REVIEWS



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Aston Martin DBS Carbon Edition

First drive

ASTON MARTIN DBS CARBON EDITION

Flagship V12 gets even more exclusive with carbon trim and new colours

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Even shift paddles get carbon trim, while brakes have been upgraded to carbon discs with orange calipers



Hand-finished leather trim gets contrasting stitching

Details

Aston Martin DBS Carbon Edition
Price: £186,582
Engine: 6.0-litre V12, 510bhp
Transmission: Six-speed automatic, rear-wheel drive
0-62mph: 4.3 seconds
Top speed: 191mph
Economy: 18.2mpg
CO₂: 367g/km
Equipment: Quilted leather roof lining, carbon ceramic brakes, sat-nav, climate control, Bang & Olufsen stereo with iPod input

On sale Now



Jack Rix
IT'S been over five years since the Aston Martin DBS announced its arrival with an explosive barrel roll in the James Bond film Casino Royale. Now, to maintain interest in the coupé, a range of special editions has started to appear. We drove the Carbon Black in June 2010, but the Carbon Edition has now taken its place. At £186,582 for the Coupé or £196,581 for the Volante, it's the most expensive Aston ever,

not counting the ultra-exclusive £1.2million One-77, of course. So can it justify the huge price? It's a relatively familiar shape these days, but the DBS is still a stunning piece of car design. Aggressive and elegant at the same time, it oozes class and still turns heads wherever it goes. The Carbon Edition can be ordered in two new colours: the eye-catching Flame Orange shown in our pictures, or a less extroverted Ceramic Grey. Every

example gets seven paint coats and a 25-hour hand polish to give it a breathtaking depth of colour and shine. A carbon fibre finish is added to the wing mirrors, front spoiler, diffuser and rear light clusters, while there are carbon brake discs and orange calipers behind the 20-inch, 10-spoke alloys. The carbon fibre theme continues inside, with the centre console covered in carbon weave and carbon scuff plates on the door



Centre console is covered in carbon fibre. While special edition doesn't add power, DBS is still as fantastic to drive as ever

sills. The quilted leather roof lining is opulent in the extreme, but it helps to make the interior feel special. Functionality has also been improved— with the infuriating old pop-up Volvo sat-nav gone in favour of much clearer Garmin software. Astons are built to be driven, not looked at, and the Carbon Edition uses the same 510bhp 6.0-litre V12 as the standard car, with a six-speed semi-auto box. With 510bhp and a 4.3-second 0-62mph time, the DBS is nowhere near as fast as the £71,950 Nissan GT-R – which does 0-62mph in 2.8 seconds – or as powerful as Ferrari's

£212,066 612bhp 599 GTB. But on icy roads around Aston Martin's Gaydon HQ, it still demanded respect. Once the engine gets into its stride above 4,000rpm, there's an intense rush of acceleration. Well weighted steering, strong brakes and a great noise all add up to a memorable driving experience, but the car still feels more suited to long-distance cruising than attacking corners at full pelt. The DBS offers an intoxicating mix of power and luxury, and the Carbon Edition adds exclusivity. The problem is price – at this level, there are more capable alternatives to the ageing Aston.

Verdict

WITH its fantastic V12 engine and beautifully finished cabin, driving a DBS is always special. The Carbon Edition doesn't get any mechanical upgrades, so it's no better to drive, but there is extra visual impact thanks to all the carbon trim, plus the optional Flame Orange paint job. The DBS was pricey in the first place, though, and this Carbon Edition adds £5,770 to the total. It's still a fabulous car, though.





FIRST DRIVES

QUICK FACTS
Price £186,582
On sale Now

Aston Martin DBS Carbon Edition

19.12.11, Warwickshire Flagship GT gets special-edition upgrade

FIRST VERDICT

New look-at-me package probably isn't worth the premium, but the DBS beneath it still thrills
★★★★☆

LAUNCHING A SPECIAL edition of an already overpriced supercar with the world on the precipice of further financial ruin may seem like reselling a first-class ticket on the Titanic with the iceberg already in sight, but projects such as this DBS Carbon Edition are a necessary part of reinvigorating buyer interest in Aston Martin's long-standing line-up as it moves through a prolonged life cycle.

The latest addition is meant as a counterpart to the DBS Carbon Black introduced in 2009. Now available in Flame Orange and Ceramic Grey, the trim level – offered in both coupé and Volante forms – features

10-spoke gloss black diamond-turned alloy wheels, and, unsurprisingly, carbonfibre detailing on the door mirrors and rear light clusters.

Inside, the woven wonder-material appears as a naked slab on the centre console, which also houses a crisp and clean new satellite navigation system from Garmin, while above your head there's a lavish quilted leather headlining so tactile that it's liable to have you endlessly pawing at the ceiling in appreciation. But that's about it, more or less.

Otherwise the 510bhp V12-powered DBS is as we left it. And fortunately, the machine beneath Aston's £6000 worth of questionable cosmetic embellishments is still a beguiling old bruiser. Athletic pomp and circumstance is the English firm's stock in trade, and its flagship is at its effortless best when radiating a

21st century interpretation of the old ancestral charm.

There's a pleasing sense of heavyweight occasion from behind the wheel, but it never overwhelms the car's ease of use or its affability. Even tested on a rain-hindered, half-throttle day, the performance is mesmeric: 12 cylinders of quiet amenability up to around 4500rpm, and then 2000rpm of venomous, howling, horizon-hungry rapture.

Marry that to the sweetest ride comfort this side of a McLaren MP4-12C and elegant, eye-watering good looks, and it's clear that despite familiar niggles and an exorbitant price tag, the DBS still has sufficient calibre to compete with any pretender to the GT throne. If a largely vacuous Carbon Edition is required to remind its customers of that fact, so be it.

NIC CACKETT



Garmin sat-nav lives in carbonfibre cubby

SO GOOD

- Heart-stopping looks
- Pulsating V12
- Improved sat-nav

NO GOOD

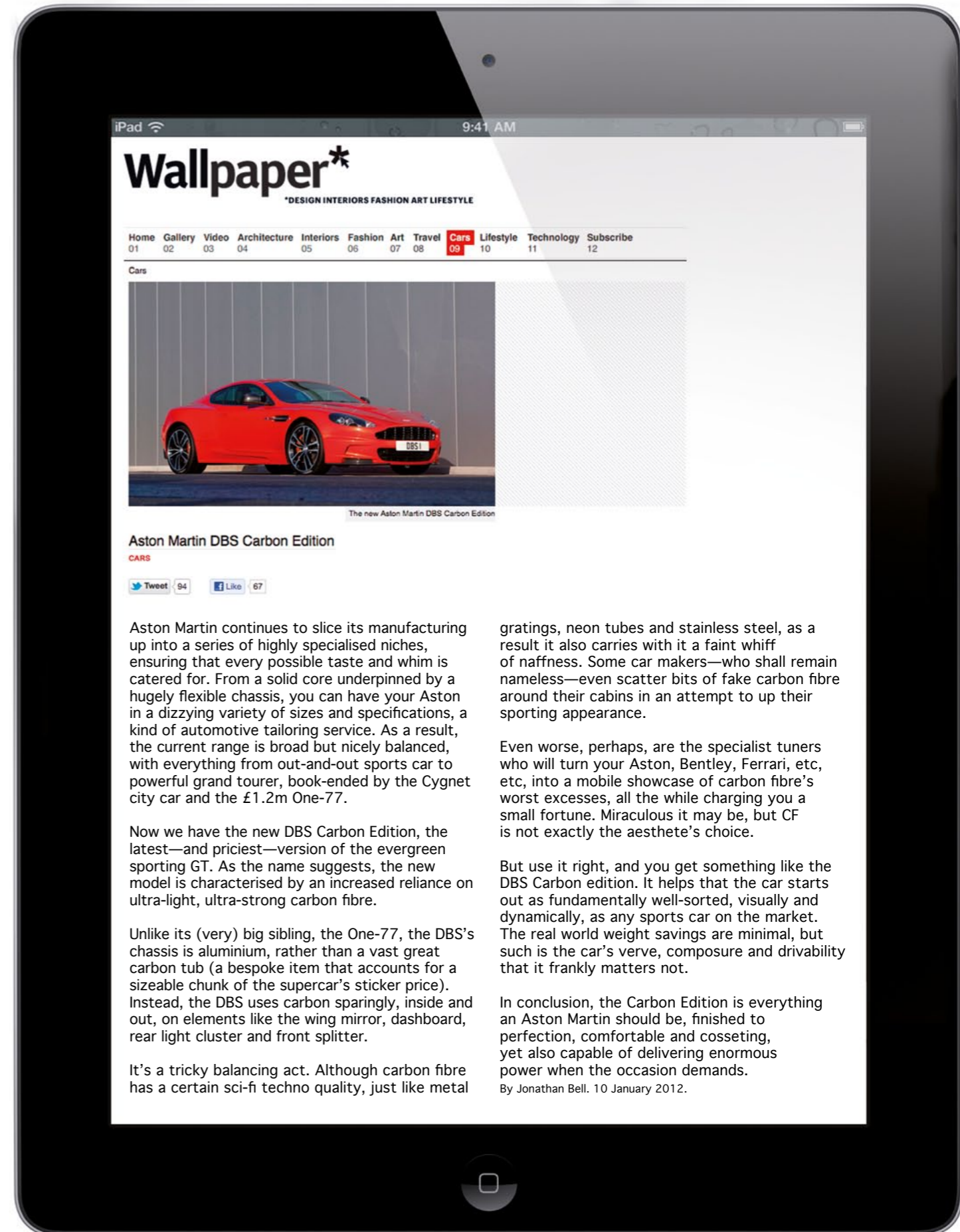
- Huge price
- Carbon add-ons add little
- Drab switchgear

FACTFILE

VITALS	ASTON MARTIN DBS CARBON EDITION
Price	£186,582
Top speed	191mph
0-62mph	4.3sec
Economy	17.3mpg (combined)
CO ₂	388g/km
Kerbweight	1695kg
Engine	V12, 5935cc, petrol
Power	510bhp at 6500rpm
Torque	420lb ft at 5750rpm
Gearbox	6-spd automatic



External carbonfibre add-ons are almost superfluous; upgraded cabin doesn't detract from the V12 driving experience



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The new Aston Martin DBS Carbon Edition

Aston Martin DBS Carbon Edition

CARS
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Aston Martin continues to slice its manufacturing up into a series of highly specialised niches, ensuring that every possible taste and whim is catered for. From a solid core underpinned by a hugely flexible chassis, you can have your Aston in a dizzying variety of sizes and specifications, a kind of automotive tailoring service. As a result, the current range is broad but nicely balanced, with everything from out-and-out sports car to powerful grand tourer, book-ended by the Cygnet city car and the £1.2m One-77.

Now we have the new DBS Carbon Edition, the latest—and priciest—version of the evergreen sporting GT. As the name suggests, the new model is characterised by an increased reliance on ultra-light, ultra-strong carbon fibre.

Unlike its (very) big sibling, the One-77, the DBS's chassis is aluminium, rather than a vast great carbon tub (a bespoke item that accounts for a sizeable chunk of the supercar's sticker price). Instead, the DBS uses carbon sparingly, inside and out, on elements like the wing mirror, dashboard, rear light cluster and front splitter.

It's a tricky balancing act. Although carbon fibre has a certain sci-fi techno quality, just like metal

gratings, neon tubes and stainless steel, as a result it also carries with it a faint whiff of naffness. Some car makers—who shall remain nameless—even scatter bits of fake carbon fibre around their cabins in an attempt to up their sporting appearance.

Even worse, perhaps, are the specialist tuners who will turn your Aston, Bentley, Ferrari, etc, etc, into a mobile showcase of carbon fibre's worst excesses, all the while charging you a small fortune. Miraculous it may be, but CF is not exactly the aesthete's choice.

But use it right, and you get something like the DBS Carbon edition. It helps that the car starts out as fundamentally well-sorted, visually and dynamically, as any sports car on the market. The real world weight savings are minimal, but such is the car's verve, composure and drivability that it frankly matters not.

In conclusion, the Carbon Edition is everything an Aston Martin should be, finished to perfection, comfortable and cossetting, yet also capable of delivering enormous power when the occasion demands.

By Jonathan Bell. 10 January 2012.

iPad 9:41 AM

CARS Car Reviews Aston Martin DBS Carbon Edition

Aston Martin DBS Carbon Edition

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BY ROB LEWIS

Rob Lewis

AUTOMOTIVE CORRESPONDENT



Like James Bond himself, who flaunted the arrival of the Aston Martin DBS around the world back in 2006's box office smash *Casino Royale*, the DBS won't go down without a fight.

It may have become a tad familiar over the years—if supercars ever truly become familiar—but Aston's top dog (excluding the stratospherically elitist One-77 and the imminent V12 Zagato, that is) hits back in 2012 with this unquestionably tempting special, and unnaturally orange, Carbon Edition.

Featuring a host of admittedly subtle aesthetic mods and relatively insignificant £6k price hoick (at least when you're spending £200k on a set of wheels) the Carbon Edition is the new DBS of choice to those who like their automotive steak rare and 100% British.

We headed over to Aston Martin HQ for an early opportunity to stretch the refreshed Bond babe's shapely legs and remind ourselves just how damn fine the DBS has always been.

The DBS, naturally, takes the most highly tuned spec of Aston's glorious 6.0-litre V12 block, bestowing a heavyweight 510bhp and a 0-62mph sprint-time of a shade over 4 seconds. Pound for pound, however, this doesn't represent a benchmark in the supercar field—but when did value figure highly, or at all, on the tick list of Aston's obsessive clientele anyway? In an automotive age of downsizing and cylinder shedding, any remaining production V12 demands reverence—especially when they're as audible, usable and character defining as this one is.

As with the engine, all the running gear and handling characteristics of the 'standard' DBS remain. So it's not so much a case of "if it ain't broke, don't fix it" as "if it's so incredibly sorted, just leave it alone."

As epic GT appeal goes there's still not a lot to top the DBS. Long journeys in a DBS become something to cherish just as much throttle blipping your way down the King's Road does. As the name suggests, this DBS has developed a bit of a fetish for the lightweight shiny black weave. On the outside carbon fibred-up accoutrements include a jutting rear diffuser, front splitter, smoked light cluster in-fills and wing mirrors while the iconic grille gains a bespoke warm black gloss finish—to discretely distance it from your everyday DBS, of course.

Only available in two colours, the Carbon Edition can either be ordered in a sensible ceramic grey or, as with our test car, shocking flame orange—both of which can now be optioned with Aston's latest satin lacquer finish for added special edition specialness.

Further design-led external extras reside with the rims. The proportionally perfect 20", 10-spokers come in full gloss black or reverse diamond turned to completely fill the four flared arch cavities, punctuated only by yellow, red, grey or black coated calipers to complement the huge ceramic brake discs.

The predictably familiar interior of course plays host to a few tailored touches too. As recently introduced with the Virage, the DBS Carbon Edition also gains the impressive new Aston/Garmin satnav system and unique, overtly opulent, quilted leather headlining to nudge the lux-factor even further up the scale.



The Aston Martin DBS Carbon Edition might not do any more than the first DBS did six years ago or ostensibly look much different, but it's seemingly ageless allure, proven cinematic machismo and exclusive new tweaks keep us wanting it just as much as we did in the first place.

iPad 9:41 AM

DRIVING REPORT

20/01/2012

Driven: Aston Martin DBS Carbon Edition

Finally, in addition to the Garmin navigation system Aston has fitted 'beam blade' (a solid piece of rubber, to you and me, with no metal framework) wipers first seen in the Virage.

Clearly, these additional features not only make financial sense (as a package, it's a saving over options-box ticking), they also result in a sensational-looking GT. I had a short drive in a Flame Orange/Obsidian Black example (the other new colour is Ceramic Grey), both to reacquaint myself with the 510bhp coupé and experience a little of that 'Carbon Edition' magic.

The immediate impression one receives on closing the elegant 'swan door' of any Gaydon-era Aston is one of solidity. Likewise when you start the engine and click the car into Drive. It moves away from standstill with purpose and heft. The Alcantara-covered steering wheel is warm to the touch and connects well with the massive 8.5J x 20in front tyres, while at low revs the engine provides easy, loping performance.

Stretch its legs a little, by exploring the upper reaches of the tachometer, and the performance pours on. It's not neck-snapping; more of an irresistible force that draws the horizon ever-closer. The CCM brakes bring the big car up nicely, and the firmish ride suits the performance-orientated nature of the car while soaking up the worst of British road surfaces.

The interior cossets, and the carbonfibre treatment of the central fascia is classily executed. I'd spent the morning with Chris Porritt researching our feature on the One-77. Carbonfibre and other composites are increasingly used nowadays at Gaydon and, even where used solely as decoration, the skill is in making it look just right. By hand-laying the weave, Aston's craftsmen ensure that the direction of the fibres exactly matches that of the form of the dashboard. It's expensive-looking, no question.

Aston Martin has always been about providing the perfect long-distance GT. Let's be honest, performance-wise and despite its war paint, the DBS is never going to challenge a 2010-level mid-engined supercar with horsepower in the high 580s. Or new-generation, direct-injection V12s with nearly another 100bhp on top of that figure.

No, it's all about presence, style and more than adequate performance on long trips for two. The DBS still delivers those qualities—and more. The Carbon Edition is an extra plus for those looking for the ultimate DBS with many features normally unobtainable, all for a package price that—were it possible to describe a £186,582 car as such—represents good value for money.

Text: Steve Wakefield

Now nearly five years old, Aston's flagship DBS has received the updated Garmin sat-nav of the Virage and, for those looking for something extra, the Carbon Edition is available in two new colour variations. Brightening up the Warwickshire countryside, we've just driven a Flame Orange one.

The first special edition DBS was the 'Carbon Black' of 2009. The latest cars are to the same specification, featuring hand-finished (a 25-hour process of flattening and polishing) seven-layer paintwork complemented by 10-spoke, gloss black diamond-turned wheels. Reversed diamond-turning or full gloss black finishes on the wheels are options.

As far as the 'Carbon' bit is concerned, the superstrong, light and visually attractive material features large on this special edition. Side-mirror covers, rear lamp in-fills, a special fascia, the Touchtronic II gearshift paddle tips and even a special edition sill plaque (with laser-etched metal inlay): all are in carbonfibre.

Inside the cabin, hand-stitched semi-aniline leather – softer and more natural to the touch – comes as standard in two colour options: Obsidian Black and Madagascar Orange. And the headlining is now in quilted leather, rather than the regular car's Alcantara.



REDISCOVER THE THRILL OF DRIVING. THE ASTON MARTIN DBS CARBON EDITION



ASTON MARTIN

The DBS Carbon Edition, a striking suite of special editions, which offer a choice of understated flair or dramatic aesthetics.

Exquisitely finished; a warm black grille, carbon-fibre mirror heads, smoked rear lights and a seductively inviting interior, create a DBS specification like never before.

Powered by a hand-built 510bhp V12 engine, the combination of raw power, race bred technology and carbon-fibre features make this DBS one of the most potent production Aston Martins ever made. It promises to be an unforgettable driving experience.

For more information
or to arrange a test drive visit
www.astonmartin.com



Official government fuel consumption figures in mpg (litres per 100km) for the Aston Martin DBS Manual/Automatic: urban 11.6/11.7 (24.3/24.2); extra-urban 24.1/26.8 (11.7/10.5); combined 17.3/18.2 (16.4/15.5). CO₂ emissions 388/367 g/km.